AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-10. **Canceled**

11. **(Currently Amended)** A method for preventing surgical adhesions of tissue which comprises applying to tissue involved in surgery a biomaterial comprised of at least one ~~hyaluronic acid derivative selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~(a) a benzyl ester of hyaluronic acid wherein 75 to 100% of the carboxyl groups of hyaluronic acid are esterified with a benzyl radical and up to 25% of the carboxyl groups are esterified with the alkyl radical of a C_{10} to C_{20} aliphatic alcohol, with the proviso that at least 80% of the carboxyl groups are esterified; and~~

~~(b) an~~ auto-crosslinked derivative of an hyaluronic acid with an average molecular weight of 150,000 to 730,000 Daltons, wherein ~~0.5~~4.5 to ~~20~~5% of the carboxyl group of hyaluronic acid are cross-linked to the hydroxyl group of the same or different hyaluronic acid molecule, wherein said cross-linked derivative has a viscosity of at least 200 $Pa*sec^{-1}$.

12. **(Withdrawn)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said derivative is the total benzyl ester in which all of the carboxyl groups of hyaluronic acid are esterified with a benzyl group.

13. **(Withdrawn)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said derivative is a benzyl ester wherein 80% of the carboxyl groups are esterified with a benzyl group.

14. **(Withdrawn)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said derivative is a benzyl ester wherein 75% of the carboxyl groups are esterified with a benzyl group and the remaining 25% carboxyl groups are esterified with the aliphatic residue of a C_{10-20} aliphatic alcohol.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said viscosity is at least 250 $Pa*sec^{-1}$~~4.5 to 5.0% of the carboxyl groups of said auto-crosslinked derivative has are cross-linked~~.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 11 wherein said biomaterial further comprises a non-biodegradable synthetic polymer.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 17, wherein said synthetic polymer is at least one member selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polyethylene, polyester and polytetrafluoroethylene.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 11, wherein said biomaterial is in the form of a gel, a membrane, a mesh or a woven or non-woven tissue.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~biomaterial of~~ method according to ~~C~~claim 11, wherein said biomaterial further ~~comprising~~comprises a biologically active agent.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~biomaterial of~~method of claim 20 wherein ~~the~~ said biologically active agent is selected from the group consisting of steroidal and non-steroidal antiinflammatories, fibrinolytics, hemostatics, antithrombotics, growth factors, antitumorals, antibacterials, antivirals and antifungals.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~biomaterial~~ method of claim ~~10~~ 11 wherein the viscosity of said ~~gel~~ cross-linked derivative is at least ~~200~~ 350 Pa^{*} Sec^{-1}.

23. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~biomaterial~~ method of claim ~~10~~ 11 wherein the viscosity of said ~~gel~~ cross-linked derivative is at least 300 Pa^{*} Sec^{-1}.

24. **(Original)** The method of claim 11 wherein said surgery is selected from the group consisting of abdominal, laparoscopic , laparotomic, intestinal, gynecologic, abdominalpelvic, peritoneal, urogenital, orthopedic, spinal/dura mater, tendon/nerve, including carpal tunnel, cardiovascular, thoracic, ophtalmic, oncologic, plastic, esthetic, ENT, paranasal sinuses, and transplantation.

25. **(NEW)** The method of claim 11, wherein the viscosity of said cross-linked derivative is at least 400 Pa^{*} Sec^{-1}.